

Samuel Nutt House  
(now Coventry Forge Inn)  
State Route #23 at  
Coventryville, Pottstown Vicinity  
Chester County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1133

HABS  
PA  
15-COV  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
801 19th Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20006

ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS...

SAMUEL NUTT HOUSE  
(now Coventry Forge Inn)

Location: State Route #23 at Coventryville, South Coventry Township, Pottstown Vicinity, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Claire W. Callahan, Pottstown R.D. #2, Pennsylvania.

Statement of Significance: This house, the original portion of which was erected about 1717, contains some exceedingly handsome mid-18th century woodwork.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

1. 300 acres surveyed 1718 to Samuel Nutt.
2. Samuel Nutt by will 1737 to Samuel Nutt, Jr., a nephew.
3. Samuel Nutt, Jr. by will 1739 to Rebecca Savage Nutt, his wife.
4. Rebecca Savage Nutt Grace et al. 1765 to Thomas Potts.
5. Exec. of Thomas Potts 1791 to Robert May.
6. Robert May 1796 to Thomas Church and Jonathan Hudson.
7. Church and Hudson 1810 to Frederick Bingaman.
8. Frederick Bingaman 1813 to John Bingaman.
9. John Bingaman exec. 1827 to Edward Boyd.
10. Edward Boyd 1833 to Joseph Carey.
11. Exec. of Joseph Carey 1850 to Louis L. Bachman.
12. Louis L. Bachman 1851 to Levi Bingaman et al.
13. Levi Bingaman 1894 to Samuel Bingaman.
14. Samuel Bingaman died 1932 leaving it to widow Catharine G. Bingaman.
15. Catharine G. Bingaman 1935 to Charles F. Pierce.
16. Charles F. Pierce 1937 to Claire W. Callahan.

2. Date of erection: Front two-and-a-half story log house was built probably very early, about the time that the nearby forge was established in 1717.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: Unknown.
5. Alterations and additions: Before 1798, according to the Direct Tax, Dept. of Internal Revenue for that year, a stone addition (18' by 20') was added to the north of the original

two-and-a-half story log house (18' by 36'). Very shortly after that, judging by the woodwork, the northwest room was added, making the house approximately 36' square. Because it was the oldest house in the vicinity where the master of Coventry Forge would have lived, it seems very likely that Samuel Nutt Sr. and Jr. (uncle and nephew) lived in the log house. The widow of Samuel Nutt, Jr., married Robert Grace in 1740. The north stone wing, 18' by 20', with the very fine woodwork may have been added in the 1750's. The northwest room, squaring off the house was certainly added early, probably very soon after the 1798 direct tax report. The original cornice on the 20' northeast section of stone remains; this 20' section included the fine northeast room and the present "center" hall. The original thick stone wall on the west side of this rear addition was removed when the northwest room was built. The pitch of the roof was greatly changed when the north stone half of the house was built. The original south rafters were spliced, making the new roof of the mid-18th century almost twice as high to the ridge as had been the old roof.

6. Important old views and references:

a. Views: None known.

b. References: Clipping and manuscript files in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa. under heading: South Coventry Twp. Lands. Also wills and deeds in Court House, West Chester, Pa.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

It was very likely the home of Samuel Nutt, the early master of Coventry Forge. Owned until 1810 by the Nutt-Grace-Potts iron masters, Rebecca Savage being the connecting link - her first husband was Samuel Nutt, Jr., and her second one Robert Grace, and her daughter was Anna who married Thomas Potts.

C. Supplemental Material:

Real Estate at Public Sale

"By virtue of an order of the Orphan's Court of Chester County, will be sold at public sale, on Wednesday the 28th of November, 1849, the following described property, (The real estate of the late Joseph Carey, deceased,) situate in the village of Coventry, South Coventry township.

"Lot No. 1. The improvements consist of a good two story HOUSE, with 4 rooms on a floor, good and substantial stone Barn,

frame Carriage House, stone Spring House, with  $9\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land in a high state of cultivation, good Apple Orchard, &c.

"Lot No. 2. The improvements are a large stone Store and Dwelling House, two stories. It is a good stand for business, contains 102 Perches, having three fronts, and is calculated to be divided into Building Lots.

"Lot No. 3. The improvements are a 2 story stone Dwelling House, stone Wheelwright and frame Blacksmith Shops. This is an excellent situation for enterprising mechanics.

"The above properties adjoin each other, and are convenient to schools and places of public worship. Persons wishing to view, previous to the day of sale, can do so by calling on Levy Ganger, living thereon. Sale to commence at (?) o'clock, p.m., on said day, when attendance (?) be given and terms made known by

PETER GRUBER  
LYDIA GANGER  
Administrators."

American Republican, West Chester, November 6, 1849.7

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The original log house was enlarged by a stone addition c. 1750, and c. 1800 a northwest room was added to this, thus making the house completely square.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Square, two-and-one-half stories; Log house: 18' by 36'; North stone wing: 18' by 20'; Additional stone section: 18' by 36'.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: Log in south half; stone in north half covered with stucco.
4. Chimneys: Two chimneys, located one on southwest slope and the other northeast slope, are of stone covered with plaster.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Wooden door to the west dates from c. 1800 when northwest room was built.
- b. Windows and shutters: Window openings probably all original with each of the three sections. They vary between six-over-six light double-hung wooden sash windows on the south front to nine-over-six light on the west and nine-over-nine light double-hung wooden sash on the east.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Steep pitch shingled gable roof, from the mid-18th century.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice on the south front is wooden accentuated by modillions and is not the original one. Original house had a pent eave to the south but cannot be traced under plaster coat.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Original house had two rooms on a floor; with an extra room to northeast added in the 1750's; and a fourth room to the northwest added c. 1800.
2. Stairways: Original from the time the first addition was added.
3. Flooring: Nearly all original. Some have a second floor over, which is of the same wide wooden floor boards but slightly newer.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: Practically all original in their section.
6. Trim: Baseboards and chair rails nearly all original; a few obvious patches. A fine built-in cupboard in the southwest room dates from c. 1750. Much of the original wooden paneling remains in the rooms.
7. Hardware: Considerable original hardware remains in the form of wrought iron hinges, mainly "H" hinges.
8. Lighting: Modern electricity.
9. Heating: Fireplaces remain; the one in southeast room

having been made smaller by building a chimney within the original one, with closets on either side.

D. Site:

General setting and orientation: Structure faces south on gently sloping hill. A smokehouse remains nearby.

Prepared by Bart Anderson  
Curator, Chester  
County Historical Society  
National Park Service  
May 1959

Addendum to:  
Samuel Nutt House (now Coventry Forge Inn)  
State Route 23 at Coventryville  
South Coventryville Township  
Pottstown vicinity  
Chester County  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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COVENTRY FORGE INN (Samuel Nutt House)

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Samuel Nutt House (now Coventry Forge Inn)  
State Route 23 at Coventryville, South Coventry Township  
Pottstown Vicinity  
Chester County  
Pennsylvania  
(as listed in the 1959 data pages)

Location: East side of Nantmeal Road, .1 mile north of Ridge  
Road (old State Route 23), Coventryville (South  
Coventry Township), Chester County, Pennsylvania.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

According to the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form prepared for the Coventryville Historic District by the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust in 1977, Samuel Nutt did not live in this house, as the 1959 data prepared by Bart Anderson of the Chester County Historical Society states. Nutt did own the property that the structure is located on, but he lived in another house called Coventry House, now owned by the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust and listed on the National Register. The earliest section of Coventry House was built in 1719, by Samuel Nutt, founder of Coventry Forge, the first iron forge in Chester County, established on French Creek in 1717.

The original occupant of the structure in question, Coventry Forge Inn, is unknown, although the National Register form suggests it could have been built by a worker at Coventry Forge. This structure is the oldest remaining in the district.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Coventry Forge Inn has been altered since the original 1959 documentation. It has been converted to a restaurant. The wooden porch was replaced by a glass enclosed porch across the south (front) elevation and a frame wing was added on the south elevation. Dormers have been added on the south roof slope.

Prepared by: Deborah S. Burns  
Architectural Historian  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
1979